

Supplemental
EPI Update for Friday, March 25, 2016
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

New guidance on prevention of Zika virus transmission from CDC:

- 1) Updated interim guidance for counseling patients about pregnancy planning and the timing of pregnancy after possible exposure to Zika virus
- 2) Updated interim guidance for preventing sexual transmission with information about how long men and women should consider using condoms or not having sex

Updated interim guidance for pregnant and reproductive age women

Mounting evidence supports a link between Zika and microcephaly, a birth defect that is a sign of incomplete brain development, and possibly other problems such as miscarriage and stillbirth. The rate of these complications is not known but is being studied further. Importantly, even in places with active Zika transmission women are delivering apparently healthy infants. Healthcare providers need clear guidance to inform discussions with their patients about possible exposure to Zika virus, pregnancy planning, and timing of pregnancy. The updated CDC recommendations are these:

- For women and men who have been diagnosed with Zika virus or who have symptoms of Zika including fever, rash, joint pain or red eyes after possible exposure to Zika virus, CDC recommends healthcare providers advise:
 - Women wait at least 8 weeks after their symptoms first appeared before trying to get pregnant.
 - Men wait at least 6 months after their symptoms first appeared to have unprotected sex.
 - In making these recommendations, we considered the longest known risk period for these categories. We then allowed for three times the known period of time.
- For men and women without symptoms of Zika virus but who had possible exposure to Zika from recent travel or sexual contact, CDC recommends healthcare providers advise their patients wait at least 8 weeks after their possible exposure before trying to get pregnant in order to minimize risk.
- For men and women without symptoms of Zika virus who live in an area with active Zika transmission, CDC recommends healthcare providers talk with their patients about their pregnancy plans during a Zika virus outbreak, the potential risks of Zika, and how they can prevent Zika virus infection. These are very complex, deeply personal decisions, and we are communicating the potential risks of Zika virus infection during pregnancy for people who live in areas with active transmission. We are encouraging health care providers to have

conversations with women and their partners about pregnancy planning, their individual circumstances and strategies to prevent unintended pregnancies.

Men and women who reside in areas with active Zika virus transmission who are considering pregnancy need clear guidance to help inform the deeply personal and very complex decision about timing of pregnancy. Conversations about health risks of pregnancy can be very difficult, but are important to have. Healthcare providers should discuss the risks of Zika, emphasize ways to prevent Zika virus infection, and provide information about safe and effective contraceptive methods. As part of their pregnancy planning and counseling with their health care providers, some women and their partners residing in areas with active Zika virus transmission may decide to delay pregnancy.

For more information, visit:

www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6512e2er.htm?s_cid=mm6512e2er_w

Updated interim guidance for preventing sexual transmission of Zika

The recommendations for men who live in or travel to an area with active Zika virus transmission who have a pregnant partner remain the same: CDC recommends that men with a pregnant partner should use condoms every time they have sex or not have sex for the duration of the pregnancy. To be effective, condoms must be used correctly from start to finish, every time during sex. This includes vaginal, anal or oral (mouth-to-penis) sex.

The updated guidance includes new timeframes for men and their non-pregnant partners based on the couple's situation, including whether the man lives in or has traveled to an area with active Zika virus transmission and whether he develops symptoms of possible Zika infection. The guidance is based on available information about how long the virus remains in semen and the risks associated with Zika based on whether or not men had symptoms of infection:

- Couples with men who have confirmed Zika or symptoms of Zika should consider using condoms or not having sex for **at least 6 months** after symptoms begin. This includes men who live in and men who traveled to areas with Zika.
- Couples with men who traveled to an area with Zika but did not develop symptoms of Zika should consider using condoms or not having sex for **at least 8 weeks** after their return in order to minimize risk.
- Couples with men who live in an area with Zika but have not developed symptoms might consider using condoms or not having sex **while there is active Zika transmission in the area**.

Couples who do not want to get pregnant should use the most effective contraceptive methods that they can use consistently and correctly, and they should also use condoms to prevent the sexual transmission of Zika. Couples who are trying to get pregnant should consult with their healthcare provider.

For more information, visit:

www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6512e2er.htm?s_cid=mm6512e2er_w

CDC will continue to update this guidance as new information becomes available, and IDPH will continue to make readers aware of these updates.